

school systems to do what we want them to do here in Washington. Essentially they are saying you, the local school district, in order to get the money which you are owed by the Federal Government, you are going to have to spend it the way we—somebody down at the Department of Education or somebody at the National Education Association labor union—want you to spend it. You are not going to be able to make that decision at the local level. You are going to have to do what we tell you that you have to do here in Washington. Had they, on the other hand, taken that money and put it into the special-needs program, put it towards the special-education student, then they would have freed up money at the local level. Then they would have given the local communities the flexibility to say how they wanted to spend their local dollars. But, by not giving the local communities those dollars for special education, by, rather, setting up these categorical programs, they ratchet down the Federal control of the local school systems.

They are saying we are going to hit you with a double whammy, local school system. First, we are not going to fund your special-ed program so you have to take from your local tax base to do that, which doesn't allow you the flexibility to use your local taxes on the educational activities you want. If you want to build a building, you cannot do it under your own terms. If you want to add a science program, you cannot do it. If you want to add some sort of foreign language program, you cannot do it—because the dollars to do that are going to have to be spent to pay the Federal cost of special education. But if you want to get more money from the Federal Government, you have to do exactly what we want you to do in the area of class size and in the area of building buildings. It is, to say the least, a rather insidious approach to trying to take control over the local school systems. And it is a cynical approach, because the loser in this is the special-needs child, because the special-needs child is still left out there in the cold, to have to fight with the local school district in order to get the adequate funding to take care of his or her needs which should have been paid for by the Federal Government.

I think I was just delivered a chart which maybe makes this point a little more precisely. Let me read it first.

If you look at current funding for IDEA State grants, it is \$3.8 billion. The funding that would bring the Federal Government to its promised 40 percent is \$16 billion. The President's proposed funding for 5 years for educational programs which are not IDEA related is \$12.34 billion. So, you can see fairly clearly from this chart what I have just pointed out, which is that if the President and his people were willing to fund the obligations of the special-needs children that are on the books instead of trying to create new

programs which take more control over the local school systems, limits the flexibility of the local school systems, underfunds the special-needs children—if they were willing to live up to the obligation which they had made as a commitment under Federal law, funding 40 percent, a lot of the pressure would be taken off the local school systems and they would have the monies necessary to pay for special-needs kids and they would also have the flexibility to do whatever they wanted with the additional money that would be freed up from the local tax base.

So we come back to this budget and the fact that the President claims that his education initiatives were not properly addressed and the Republican budget doesn't adequately address education. The Republican budget does not take the President's approach. We put \$2.5 billion of additional money into the IDEA program. No, we do not fund all the new initiatives that the President wants because we believe we should fund the initiatives that are on the books first. We believe we should take the special-needs child out from under the cloud of the Federal Government not fulfilling its obligations, free up the local taxpayer and the local school board so it has the money to make the decisions that are needed to be made at the local level rather than have the Federal Government not fund the special-needs programs but create new categorical programs which try to take control over the local school system.

So, the President, as I mentioned earlier, is at the least, to be kind, being disingenuous, inconsistent, and in this instance specifically not fulfilling the obligation of the Federal Government to the special-needs child. So I am perfectly happy, as we move forward on the debate on this budget, to put the Republican budget on education up against the Democratic budget on education—up against the President's proposals on education.

I come to this floor as someone who headed up a school for special-needs children and who recognizes, on a personal level, how important it is that we give these kids full and adequate education. I come to this floor speaking on behalf of Republicans on the Budget Committee who say we will make our stand, we will be happy to make our stand on fulfilling our obligation to the special-needs child, and we will be happy to debate with any member of the minority party who wants to come forward with the President's proposal and claim that new initiatives—which will take more control over the local school systems, which are basically sops to various political groups who support them, and which do absolutely nothing to fulfill our obligation to the special-needs child—take priority, take priority over the law as it has already passed that said we would pay 40 percent of the cost of those children but, more important, over the fact that we have, for too long, left these kids in the

lurch and put them in the intolerable position of having to compete for resources to which they, under the law, have a right.

I yield the floor.

SUPPORT FOR MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY IN THE NCAA MEN'S BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, with the serious issue of NATO expansion out of the way, I want to draw my colleagues' attention to another topic with national implications. Tonight, Michigan State University will face the University of North Carolina in the semifinals of the NCAA Men's Basketball tournament.

In anticipation of this contest, I would like to announce a friendly agreement between myself and my colleague from North Carolina, Senator FAIRCLOTH. As an alumnus of Michigan State University, I have so much confidence that the Spartans will beat the Tar Heels that I have indicated to the Senator from North Carolina I will make available to him a bushel of the finest, fresh Michigan cherries in the event that somehow my expectations are dashed. It is my understanding that the Senator from North Carolina has promised, if I am correct, that Michigan will receive a product of North Carolina origin, specifically North Carolina peanuts, if we should win.

When the best of the Big Ten faces the best of the Atlantic Coast Conference, I will bet on the Big Ten every time, Mr. President. Michigan State may be the underdog on paper, but seeds and rankings mean nothing once the ball is tipped. I know that Coach Tom Izzo's squad is having their best season in years, and their ride isn't going to end just yet. I look forward to the result and reporting back to the Senate at my next opportunity.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll. The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Mark Williams, Maria Piza-Ramos, and Jeff Pegler be accorded privilege of the floor for the pendency of the debate on Senator COVERDELL's legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. President.

PUBLIC SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, in this period for morning business, I would